

gentleman from Missouri would be that I think that the votes will be there on our side for, I hear a figure of very close to \$300 billion being mentioned. I think on this side of the aisle in talking to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), we will be obviously substantially influenced by what the gentleman from Minnesota recommends as our ranking member but we would be very, I think, supportive and we could forge a significant majority to send that bill down to the President and have the President consider it.

As the gentleman knows, every \$1 billion that we have in that bill creates 42,000 jobs here in America. We believe that bill is very important. We would have hoped it would have passed last year, but I want to tell my friend that he and I have the similar responsibilities of trying to count votes and I think we will have the overwhelming majority of our people for a bill. If we just split the difference between the Senate and the House, which is essentially what is being talked about, I think we would support it on this side of the aisle. I hope the gentleman's Members would support it on his side of the aisle, we send it to the President and obviously the executive, a coequal but separate branch of government, would have to make its determination as to what it wanted to do. I do not know if that is a possibility but I think we could work together in a bipartisan fashion to get that done.

I yield to my friend if he wants to make a comment.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for yielding, and I share the gentleman's sense that an overwhelming number of Members of the House would like to get this work done, get this bill done this year. Of course this would not be the place for the gentleman and I to try to negotiate a number, but I think the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) are both working hard to achieve a result that gets that work going and allows the States and others affected by this to begin the contracting process and even begin some of the work. I am very hopeful at this point that we will get that number agreed to, get our friends on the other side of this building moving forward with us and get agreement from the White House as they need to ultimately sign whatever bill we pass.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I think the gentleman has put his finger on the impasse, and that is the White House. I think frankly the Congress can reach agreement on this and I think we ought to. I urge the majority reaching consensus in the Congress and, as a separate and coequal branch of government, sending our judgment down to the White House. Obviously the White House then has its full prerogatives to exercise its judgment. But we have waited far too long on that, I believe.

The last question or the last inquiry I would make of the whip is there has

been a lot of talk, of course, about the middle-class tax cuts. I think both sides of the aisle feel very strongly that we want to make sure the middle-class tax cuts continue. In particular, we have focused on the child tax credit, as the gentleman knows. There has been a lot of discussion back and forth. That has been held up for a very long period of time, particularly extension to those families making up to \$26,000. There are some 200,000 service families, as the gentleman knows, that are not qualifying for the child tax credit at this point in time.

Can the gentleman tell us whether or not he has any optimism about that conference report coming back to us anytime soon?

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would say in response to that previous comment that I am not sure that our friends on the other side of this building are as united yet as perhaps our Members are who represent the House side on the transportation number. We want to move forward there.

Chairman THOMAS tells me that he sees good work happening on the family tax package that the gentleman mentioned, the marriage penalty relief, the \$1,000 child credit, the 10 percent tax bracket, that new tax bracket we put in place. We think it is very likely that we could have that extension on the floor next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

ADJOURNMENT TO FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2004, AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2004 TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Friday, September 17, 2004; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 21, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HIS EXCELLENCY AYAD ALLAWI, INTERIM PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Thursday, September 23, 2004, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting His Excellency Ayad Allawi, Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

HOURLY OF MEETING ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Wednesday, September 22, 2004, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, September 23.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

CONGRESS BESTS LOBBYISTS ONCE AGAIN IN CHARITY BASKETBALL GAME

(Mr. QUINN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I am here to report to the House and to the general public the results of last evening's sixth annual benefit basketball game between Members of Congress and the lobbying community here in Washington. I am here also to report that the outcome was a 58-41 victory for the Members of Congress.

I would like to mention the players, our bipartisan team of JEFF FLAKE, VITO FOSSELLA, HAROLD FORD, KENNY HULSHOF, DEVIN NUNES, TODD PLATTS, TIM RYAN, JOHN SHIMKUS, and TODD TIAHRT.

In the past 6 years I am also happy to report that the House Members have a 5-1 record after last night's game, but to report after 6 years that the game has raised over \$150,000 for charities here in Washington, D.C., particularly the Hortons Kids charity that services inner city young children.

Special thanks also, Mr. Speaker, to Mr. Paul Miller and others at the American League of Lobbyists, who worked tirelessly during the year to put the game together. As we go forward in the next year, hopefully we can do bigger and better things.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair